

# Supporting Someone Struggling with Substance Use Issues

Supporting someone with substance use issues can be challenging, but your care and understanding are crucial to their recovery journey. It's important to approach the situation with compassion, patience, and a commitment to helping in a way that respects their needs and autonomy.

## Educate Yourself and Stay Informed:

- Learn about substance use and recovery options.
- Understand the stages of recovery.
- Familiarize yourself with signs of trouble or relapse.

## Approach with Compassion and Understanding:

- Be nonjudgmental and patient.
- Recognize that substance use issues are complex.
- Listen actively, without criticism.

## Offer Practical Help:

- Provide assistance with things that reduce stress.
- Make it easier for them to focus on their recovery.
- Encourage participation in healthy activities.

## Encourage Professional Help:

- Gently suggest seeking help from a healthcare provider or counselor.
- Offer to help find resources or attend appointments.

## Set Healthy Boundaries:

- Prioritize your own mental health.
- Protect your own emotional well-being.
- Set boundaries to prevent burnout.
- Clearly communicate unacceptable behaviors (e.g., substance use in your home) while continuing to express care and concern.

## Be Patient and Realistic:

- Celebrate their efforts, no matter how small.
- Accept setbacks as a natural part of recovery.
- Encourage ongoing growth and progress.
- Offer support even when progress seems slow.

## Take Care of Yourself:

- Prioritize self-care.
- Practice stress-reduction techniques.
- Seek support when needed.
- Consider joining a support group.

**If the person's situation is urgent or you're concerned for their safety, reach out to a helpline, counselor, or emergency service.**

For additional resources and strategies to help support someone struggling with substance use, reach out to the EAP.